



Memorandum

To: Mayor Nelson and Members of the City Council

From: Daniel R. Buchholtz, MMC, Administrator, Clerk/Treasurer

Date: September 7, 2023

Subject: Emerald Ash Borer Discussion

Mayor Nelson asked that the City Council discuss the City's response to Emerald Ash Borer.

Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) is a small, metallic green beetle native to Asia that is about the size of a grain of rice. Its larvae are creamy white and found beneath the bark of ash trees. The larvae feed on the inner bark of ash trees, disrupting the tree's ability to transport water and nutrients, leading to the tree's decline and eventual death. Since its discovery in the United States, EAB has killed hundreds of millions of ash trees, creating significant ecological, economic and aesthetic implications for infested areas.

EAB was first confirmed in the Twin Cities metropolitan area in 2009. Since its identification, measures have been undertaken to manage the spread and impact of EAB. These measures include public awareness and education, tree inventory and monitoring, chemical treatments, biological controls, tree removal and replacement, and firewood quarantines.

Actions staff is taking include:

- Working on a grant application to the DNR to fund a tree inventory of all trees in the City's parks and right of ways. This tree inventory is important to identify the scope of the problem and the resources necessary to address it. The inventory will provide conditions of the trees to inform which ones we should focus on cutting down and which ones are worth treating. If we are unsuccessful with our application to the DNR, we will apply to use funds from the Anoka County HRA for the inventory.
- Updating the City's nuisance code to include EAB as a tree disease so Code Enforcement can work with private property owners to abate dead/dying trees.
- Reaching out to Rainbow Tree Care about a partnership for treatment of public trees and providing discounts to residents for private trees. We are waiting for them to send additional information about the program.
- Exploring utilizing the City's HRA dollars with Anoka County to fund a grant/low interest loan program to finance tree removal and replacement on private property.
- Dedicating \$50,000 in the 2024 General Fund budget to fund Forestry activities related to EAB.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 763-784-6491.